

**i** **talk**  
they hear you

**2016**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**National Media  
Campaign for the  
Prevention of  
Underage Drinking**

***Talk. They Hear You.***  
**Campaign Highlights**

**June 2016**

# Leading Change 2.0: SAMHSA Acts To Prevent Underage Drinking

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) seeks to promote positive mental health and prevent substance abuse and mental illness. SAMHSA has long worked to reduce the impact of these issues on America's communities.

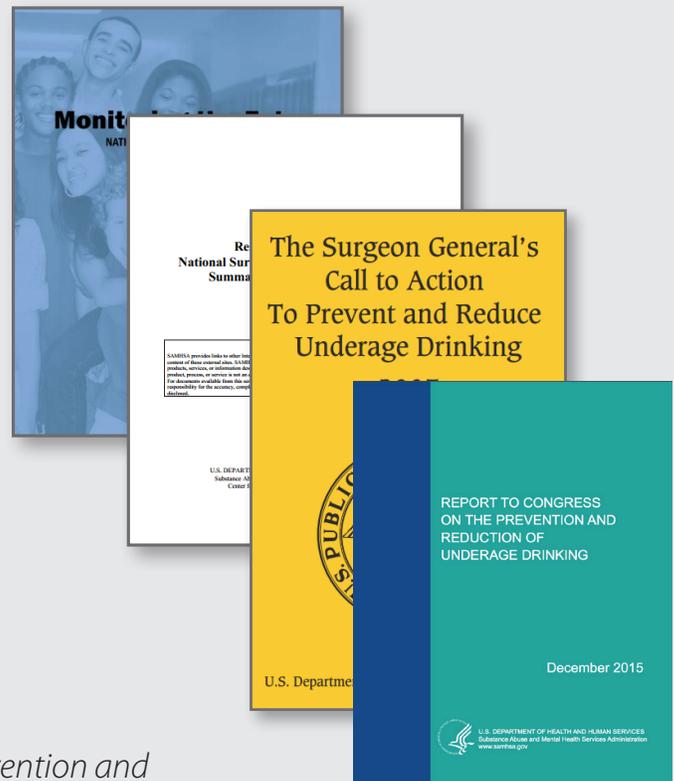
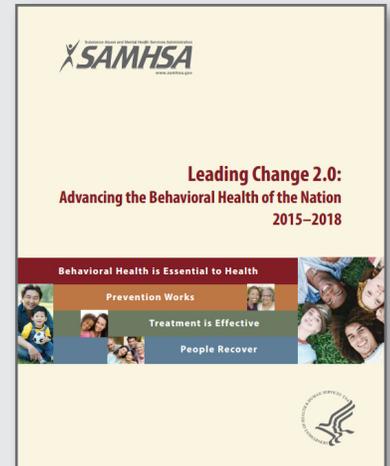
Alcohol use by those younger than the legal age of 21 remains a serious public health and safety problem, undermining the well-being of America's youth. Ten percent of 9- to 10-year-olds have already started drinking,<sup>1</sup> and more than 20 percent of underage drinkers begin drinking before age 13.<sup>2</sup> The human cost of underage alcohol use is enormous, with many of the harmful consequences immediate and all too evident for youth, families, and communities.

In response, SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), through the Sober Truth on Underage Drinking Act (STOP Act), created the Underage Drinking Prevention National Media Campaign. The campaign—**Talk. They Hear You.**—engages parents and caregivers of children ages 9 to 15 in preventing underage drinking.

The campaign aims to:

1. Increase parent *awareness of the prevalence and risk* of underage drinking;
2. Equip parents with the *knowledge, skills, and confidence* to prevent underage drinking; and
3. Increase parent *actions to prevent underage drinking*.

This campaign supports SAMHSA's *Strategic Initiative No. 1, Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illness*, Goal 1.2: to prevent and reduce underage drinking and young-adult problem drinking. The *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign is congressionally mandated and is evaluated and reported annually in the *Report to Congress on the Prevention and Reduction of Underage Drinking*.



Note: The background activities in the Preface describe efforts conducted in the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years.

## What the Research Suggests

Alcohol continues to be the most widely abused substance among our nation's young people. SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that a higher percentage of youth (22.8 percent) ages 12 to 20 used alcohol in the past month than used tobacco (7 percent) or illicit drugs (9.4 percent).<sup>3</sup> Underage alcohol consumption increased with age in a steady progression from 1.2 percent for 12-year-olds to 53.3 percent for 20-year-olds.<sup>4</sup>

Parents have a significant influence on young people's decisions about alcohol consumption.<sup>5</sup> When parents know about underage alcohol use, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with it. Furthermore, parents who do not discourage underage drinking may have an indirect influence on young people's alcohol use.<sup>6</sup>

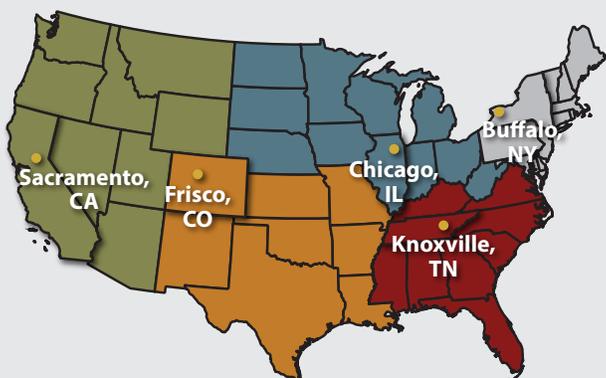
SAMHSA's *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign addresses these issues by drawing from social marketing and health education behavior theories, and the latest scientific research and feedback from audiences across the country.

## Piloting *Talk. They Hear You.* Across the National Prevention Network (NPN) Regions

In early to mid-2012, SAMHSA developed a national pilot program to test and refine campaign creative materials and pretest the campaign's national objectives in communities across the country. Five pilot sites implemented and evaluated the campaign. The feedback received from market testing was incorporated into the final materials prior to launch.

### Pilot sites were asked to:

- Use campaign messages and materials in current underage drinking awareness and education activities;
- Host at least one underage drinking awareness event;
- Include underage drinking research in existing educational materials;
- Provide overall feedback on the Public Service Announcements (PSAs); and
- Gauge attitudes, behaviors, and concerns about underage drinking.



**The National Prevention Network's Five Regions**

### Selected pilot sites:

- People Reaching Out (Western NPN Region)
- Metropolitan Drug Commission (Southeast NPN Region)
- Asian Health Coalition (Central NPN Region)
- Summit Prevention Alliance (Southwest NPN Region)
- Erie County Council (Northeast NPN Region)

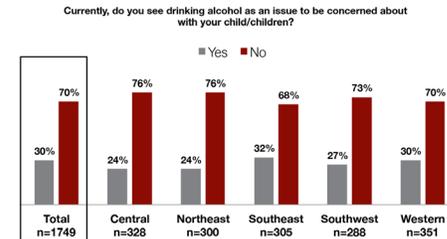
# Pilot Testing Campaign Effectiveness Before Launch

In addition to the pilot sites, SAMHSA administered a national Web survey to establish baseline attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors linked to underage drinking. Through “control” and “stimulus” groups, SAMHSA assessed longitudinal changes in underage drinking prevention behaviors and attitudes over a 3-month period. A small sample provided qualitative feedback on the content, layout, and delivery of the public service announcements (PSAs).

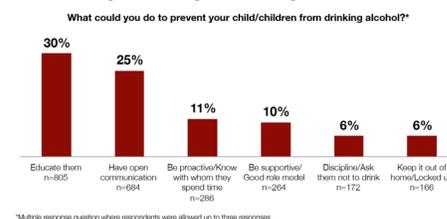
## Measuring our success:

- Underage drinking is not a top-of-mind issue; less than half of all parents surveyed reported concern.
- Education and conversations with children were the top two ways parents said they could prevent underage drinking.
- Women are much more likely to have talked with their children about underage drinking.
- The majority of parents exposed to the materials said they were believable; a third said the materials left an impression on them.
- A quarter of parents exposed to the PSAs agreed the PSAs were among the best ads they had seen on underage drinking prevention.
- A quarter of parents exposed to the PSAs said they would seek out more information about SAMHSA.
- Parents exposed to the PSAs were much more likely to have talked with their children about the dangers of underage drinking in the last 3 months.
- Parents and caregivers asked for more modeling scenarios in the print PSAs.

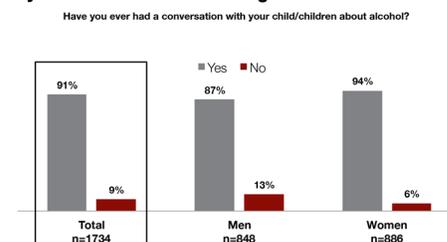
### General Attitude Toward Underage Drinking: by Region



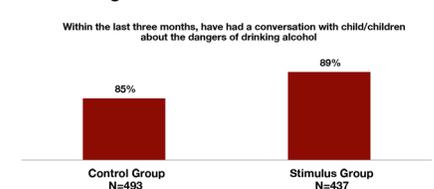
### Preventing Underage Drinking



### Discussion of Underage Drinking: by Gender of Parent/Caregiver



### Discussion with Children About the Dangers of Drinking Alcohol



<sup>1</sup> Donovan JE. *Really underage drinkers: the epidemiology of children's alcohol use in the United States*. *Prev Sci*. 2007 Sep;8(3):192-205.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2011. *Surveillance Summaries. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 61, SS-4, 1–162.

<sup>3</sup> Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2015). *Behavioral health trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (HHS Publication No. SMA 15-4927, NSDUH Series H-50).

<sup>4</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved from <http://samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/DetTabs/NSDUH-DetTabsTOC2012.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Nash, S.G., McQueen, A., and Bray, J.H. (2005). Pathways to adolescent alcohol use: Family environment, peer influence, and parental expectations. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 37(1), 19-28.

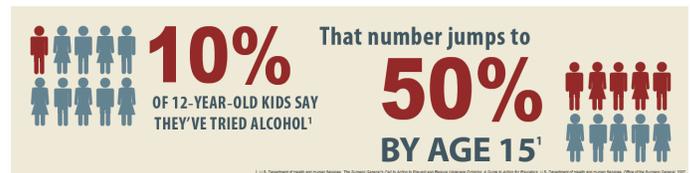
<sup>6</sup> Sieving, R.E., Maruyama, G., Williams, C.L., and Perry, C.L. (2000). Pathways to adolescent alcohol use: Potential mechanisms of parent influence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 10(4), 489–514.

## Empowering Parents To Prevent Underage Drinking

SAMHSA's *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign engages parents and caregivers of children ages 9 to 15 in the prevention of underage drinking. Underage drinking remains a national public health issue, especially among adolescents.



### Parents have significant influence on young people's decisions about alcohol consumption.



- Despite its prevalence, underage drinking is not a top-of-mind issue for parents.
- Children said that parents are the primary messengers for underage drinking prevention.
- To succeed, parents need prompts and conversation starters for talking with their children.

## The Year in Review



Building on lessons learned from prior years, the campaign continues to leverage communication channels to promote campaign resources and help increase actions by parents to prevent underage drinking.

### Collective promotion activities from June 18, 2015 – June 17, 2016 helped drive 44,867 visits to samhsa.gov/underage-drinking—an 80-percent increase from the prior year.

This year, a priority for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA) *Talk. They Hear You.* Campaign was to develop resources specifically for Spanish-speaking populations. Hispanics account for 17 percent of the total population of the United States and 24 percent of the youth population.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Jackson, C., Henriksen]. U.S. Census Bureau. State and county QuickFacts. From <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html> (accessed July 20, 2015).

## TIMELINE

### May 2013

- Launched *Talk. They Hear You.*
- Launched Campaign Website
- Deliver campaign materials to partners
- Released Inaugural PSAs

### May 2013 – October 2013

- Implemented launch year evaluation efforts

### October 2013

- Launched new online role play tool, "Start the Talk"

# Spanish PSA Concept Testing and Development

This year, SAMHSA developed a new Spanish-language public service announcement (PSA) for television and radio. Different PSA concepts were developed for testing in focus groups in the following four regions:

- Los Angeles, CA
- Miami, FL
- San Antonio, TX
- Washington, DC



The selected concept, *Dinner Table*, stemmed from research that showed Latino children are more likely to eat with their family six or seven times a week than children of other racial/ethnic groups.

The resulting PSA showed how parents and caregivers can use opportunities in their everyday lives, such as moments at family meals, to talk with their children about underage drinking. The PSA premiered during SAMHSA’s National Prevention Week (May 15-21, 2016).

## Materials Adaptations

This year 30 *Talk. They Hear You.* materials were adapted into Spanish. These materials followed a phased approach for production, including adaptation/translation of each material, and development of new content and graphics.



The website, *Hable. Ellos Escuchan.* Was launched in March 2016. The new Spanish-language website housed key resources designed specifically for parents and national partners to promote the campaign message.

### December 2013

- Production of new TV PSA, “Mom’s Thoughts”

### January 2014

- Native American Technical Expert Meeting
- National Partner Meeting

### February 2014

- Release of new TV PSA, “Mom’s Thoughts” during 2014 National Prevention Week

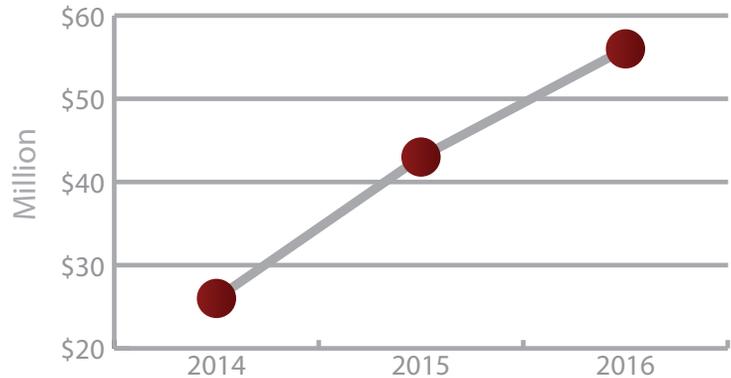
### May 2014

- *Talk. They Hear You.* mobile app released

# Reaching Parents Through Relevant Channels

Through June 17, 2016, the *Talk. They Hear You.* PSAs have appeared in all 50 states earned more than:

**5.67**  
billion  
impressions



Generated an advertising equivalency of more than \$56 million across all media outlets

Since launching in 2013, the PSAs have been distributed to:



**2138**  
broadcast  
TV stations



**1116**  
cable TV  
stations

**4140**



**radio  
outlets**

**3131**



**print  
outlets**



**Heading out to hang with friends.  
A perfect moment to talk about alcohol.**

Alarming numbers of pre-teens are drinking alcohol—which makes it urgent to find every opportunity to talk to your kids about the dangers of underage drinking. For tips on how—and when—to begin the conversation, visit: [www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov](http://www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov)



Nov. 2014 – Dec. 2014

- Revised Strategic Communications Plan

January 2015

- Started outreach to Prevention, Out-of-Home, Health Care,

Community, and School-Based Organizations

February 2015

- Promoted mobile app during 2015 National Prevention Week

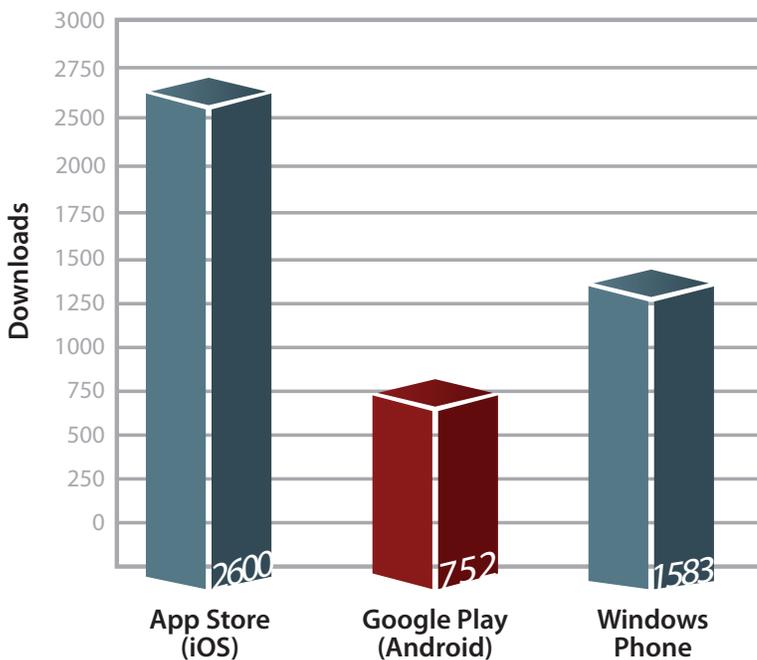
# Building Skills With the *Talk. They Hear You.* App

The *Talk. They Hear You.* app features an interactive simulation that uses avatars to help parents practice bringing up the topic of alcohol, learn the questions to ask, and get ideas for keeping the conversation going.



## Promoting the *Talk. They Hear You.* App

The *Talk. They Hear You.* mobile app garnered 3,404 downloads in the last year—a 124 percent increase from cumulative downloads garnered in the prior year.



Total Number of Downloads

**4,935**

The mobile app is available through the App Store<sup>SM</sup>, Google Play<sup>TM</sup>, and the Windows<sup>®</sup> Phone.

### March 2015

- Launched paid advertising campaign on social media

### April 2015

- Released "Start the Conversation About Underage Drinking" infographic

### May 2015

- Updated website to feature *Talk. They Hear You.* app
- Interview with Just Believe Radio

- Released "It's Never too Early to Start Talking About Underage Drinking" infographic

# Increasing Talk. They Hear You App Downloads

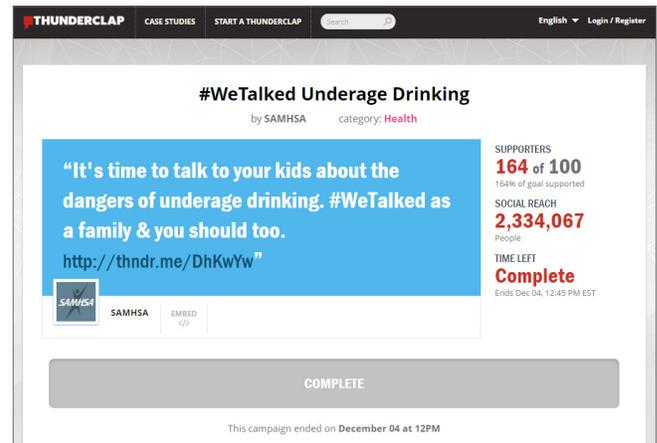
SAMHSA implemented paid Facebook promotion March 16 to April 13, 2016, to promote the *Talk. They Hear You.* mobile app to target audiences. As a result of the paid ads, the app was downloaded 551 times between March 16 and April 13—a 116-percent increase when compared to the previous 30 days. Ads generated more than 4 million impressions and drove more than 9,000 clicks to the app download page at SAMHSA.gov. The campaign also garnered more than 2,200 likes and 1,300 shares.



## #WeTalked Campaign

From November 13 to December 31, *Talk. They Hear You.* implemented use of a hashtag for parents to confirm that they had engaged with their children about underage drinking and to share their experiences.

The hashtag, “#WeTalked,” was used in 36 SAMHSA social media posts as well as a Thunderclap campaign, which allowed people to support the cause by lending their social media handles for a one-time, mass-shared post.



Paid promotion leading up to the Thunderclap campaign garnered more than 1.9 million impressions and more than 20,000 engagements on Facebook and Twitter. Facebook, alone, garnered 1.6 million of those impressions.



### Facebook

- 1,065 likes
- 696 shares
- 64 comments
- 1,690,734 impressions



### Twitter

- 636 likes
- 1,003 retweets
- 540,051 impressions



### Thunderclap

- 164 supporters (surpassing initial goal of 100)
- 2,334,067 social media users reached

### June 2015

- Begin app integration and optimization
- Released mobile app promotional video
- Released “Know the Facts About Underage Binge Drinking” infographic
- Translated campaign materials into Spanish
- Create and distribute new print PSAs
- National Partner Meeting

# Broadening Campaign Reach Through Partners

In 2016 SAMHSA expanded partner outreach to 10 new organizations that reach Spanish-speaking audiences. Groups such as the ASPIRA Foundation, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, were selected for their efforts in youth leadership development and access to Hispanic/Latino families.

*Talk. They Hear You.* materials and resources were shared with more than 50 partners in the last year, including the above 10 organizations that reach Spanish-speaking audiences. Outreach included sharing campaign resources, PSAs, and the mobile app.



In conjunction with Alcohol Awareness Month and National Prevention Week, for example, social media messages that linked to campaign resources and the newly launched *Hable. Ellos Escuchan.* website were disseminated to partners. As a result of this outreach the campaign observed increased online engagement in May.



The Faces & Voices of Recovery Facebook page posted a pre-crafted National Prevention Week message linking to the Why Small Conversations Make a Big Impression page on May 16. The post garnered more than 40 engagements (reactions, comments, and shares)—including shares from campaign partners like the National Association for Children of Alcoholics—helping to drive more than 1,500 page views to the *Talk. They Hear You.* website on May 17. May 17 was also the date that garnered the most traffic to [samhsa.gov/underage-drinking](http://samhsa.gov/underage-drinking) that month.

## September 2015

- Revised Strategic Communications Plan

## December 2015

- Launched #WeTalked social media campaign

## January 2016

- Pilot survey conducted with parents and caregivers of children ages 9- to 15-years-old

## March 2016

- Launched new Spanish-language campaign site, *Hable. Ellos Escuchan.*
- Started production of new Spanish-language TV PSA, "Dinner Table"

## Continuing to Evolve

To prevent underage drinking and empower parents to talk to their kids about it, the *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign continues to grow. Upcoming activities include:



- Creating a new *Talk. They Hear You.* PSA (including video, radio, and print versions) that puts emphasis on parent-to-parent peer conversations on the topic of underage drinking and talking to children about the dangers of alcohol. Concepts will be tested in focus groups among target audiences.
- Evaluating the campaign to inform future approaches. This will include convening a technical expert advisory panel for feedback; engaging Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), a campaign partner, to recruit participants in six cities for focus group discussions among parents; and conducting forced-exposure case studies in selected school sites in areas that currently have limited campaign outreach.
- Exploring new ways to distribute campaign messages and materials to primary and secondary audiences, such as refinements to the campaign's mobile app.



### March 2016

- Launched 30-day paid Facebook campaign to promote mobile app

### April 2016

- Outreach to all 50 partners for Alcohol Awareness Month,

including 10 new Hispanic/Latino organizations

### May 2016

- Released new Spanish-language TV PSA during 2016 National Prevention Week



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